

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Personnel for Plans and Control

FROM : [REDACTED]
Chief, Position Management and Compensation Division

SUBJECT : Response to Comments in Referent Memorandum Concerning
Position Classification Support to Information
Services Staff/DDO (U/AIUO)

REFERENCE : A. Memo for [REDACTED] Special Assistant
to the DDCI from Chief, Information Services Staff,
DDO, dtd 22 June 77; Subject: Clerical Personnel
(U/AIUO)

B. Note for D/Pers from [REDACTED]
Assistant to the Deputy Director, dtd 27 June 77;
Subject: Clerical Personnel (U/AIUO)

1.(C) General

The general tenor of the comments in referent memorandum appears to be that the Position Management and Compensation Division is a principal contributor to the career management problems confronting the Information Services Staff. This may reflect the longstanding and continuing disagreements between ISS (and its predecessor, Records Integration Division) and PMCD over position grades and factors which constitute professional level work. As far back as 1960, a PMCD survey of RID found that approximately [REDACTED] positions then in existence were overgraded. The findings of that survey, and those of subsequent surveys, were properly based on external comparisons with similar positions in other Federal agencies, and on the application of Government position classification standards. It is important to note that historically, Agency clerical position grades, particularly in mail and file related occupations, have exceeded the grades of similar positions elsewhere in the Federal Service. Unfortunately, the RID position grade problems were never satisfactorily resolved, and the underlying disagreements regarding an equitable grade structure for the positions in question have continued to the present.

The memorandum strongly suggests that a higher grade structure would be the panacea for curing ISS morale problems and for retaining quality employees. For example, the statement that 19 of 23 GS-07 clerical

employees in ISS are qualified for promotion implies that the current system which ties clerical promotions to position grades is totally unfair. We do not question the promotability of these employees; however, it is the level of work required rather than the quality of performance that must be taken into account in determining position grades. Indeed, even in professional levels within the Agency, PRA promotions above the grade of the position are made with the expectation that the employee will subsequently be assigned to a position which will accommodate his grade. It should also be obvious that certain occupations must peak at a given grade level; otherwise, job/grade relationships with other occupations would be grossly distorted.

2.(U/AIUO) Length of PMCD Survey of ISS Positions

STATINTL The criticism that PMCD spent almost two years on an intermittent basis to complete the survey of ISS is valid. This delay largely reflects the heavy PMCD workload, and it has not always been possible to provide components the service that they understandably expect. However the remark in referent memorandum that "no announced conclusions" of PMCD survey findings have been made available to ISS is inaccurate. Although ISS has not yet been given a written report, the surveying officer has held several "feedback" sessions with ISS managers. Survey recommendations and the rationale for these recommendations were discussed in detail with the Group and Branch Chiefs. [REDACTED] was briefed on the general survey findings which included the proposed downgrading of a significant number of positions and, at his request, was advised of the extent to which this might impact on the grades of ISS senior management positions.

3.(C) Use of CSC Position Evaluation Standards

In his comments on the dialogue between ISS and PMCD concerning the Factor Evaluation System, the Chief, ISS specifically alludes to the draft Agency Mail and File (Information Control and Records) Standard. This draft standard was patterned after the one published by the Civil Service Commission for use throughout the Federal Government. PMCD tested the CSC standard and found that, for the most part, the standard was directly applicable to Agency mail and file type positions. PMCD also edited the CSC standard and introduced Agency terminology and benchmark position descriptions that typified actual Agency work situations without changing appreciably the substance of the CSC standard. The draft Agency standard was then submitted to each directorate for comments prior to formal publication and implementation. PMCD is awaiting the return of comments from the directorates to determine whether adjustments in the standard are necessary to reflect any unique Agency functions not found in the CSC version. Thus ISS, as the DDO office with the preponderance of positions allocable to the Mail and File (Information Control and Records) Series, will have the opportunity to comment on the standard's validity and applicability before it is published for job evaluation purposes.

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The dismay registered by ISS because the draft Agency standard appears to write off technology "as a mere convenience which does not affect the basic level of mail or file work" is somewhat puzzling. First of all, it should be pointed out that the sentences in the draft standard pertaining to the effects of automation on mail and file operations and in [REDACTED] comments were taken almost verbatim from the draft CSC standard. Since the now published CSC standard for the Mail and File Series does not reflect changes to the original statements in the draft standard relative to the effects of automation on mail and file operations, it is apparent that comments received from Federal Agencies and unions on the draft standard did not reflect any valid objections in this regard. It seems inconceivable, therefore, that the CSC statements on automation could apply to mail and file positions throughout the government, including organizations such as IRS which have sophisticated automated filing systems, and not apply to the CIA. However, ISS was advised that where an automated system requires a higher level of skills, or appreciably increases the complexity of a mail and file position, PMCD will give proper recognition to such factors in the evaluation process. On the other hand, if the technological change is essentially mechanical, no additional credit would be given. For example, the use of a CRT to obtain information formerly found on microfiche would not in itself justify raising the position grade. In any event, as previously stated, the comments of ISS and other Agency components will be studied by PMCD and, where appropriate, will be incorporated into the standard prior to final publication.

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[REDACTED] was also briefed in some detail on the Agency's approach to position standards development.

[REDACTED] STATINTL

Attachments

Distribution:

- 0 & 1 - Addressee
- 2 - PMCD

OP/PMCD/ [REDACTED]

(19 June 1977)

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Executive Registry

77-7938/3

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

27 June 1977

FILED 77-2138

NOTE FOR: Director of Personnel

SUBJECT: Clerical Personnel

Fred:

The attached memorandum from [REDACTED] Chief, ISS, responds to my request that he give the DDCI some background information on the institutional problems that may have contributed to the [REDACTED] is a GS-07 who, until recently, was the chief of registry in [REDACTED] was preceded by a GS-11 and succeeded by a GS-12.

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Please provide the DDCI with your comments and thoughts on [REDACTED] memo. Specifically, has there been a two-year survey of ISS positions with no announced results or conclusions? Do Civil Service position evaluation standards fail to take account of the skills needed to manage a highly automated record storage and retrieval system?

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[REDACTED]
Assistant to the Deputy Director

Attachment:
ER 77-7938/2

77-7938/2
CL BY 003484

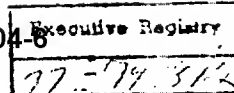
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22 JUN 1977

25X1A MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]
Special Assistant to the DDCI
25X1A FROM : [REDACTED]
Chief, Information Services Staff, DO
SUBJECT : Clerical Personnel. (U/AIUO)

25X1A 1. (C) In a recent memorandum prepared at your request, I described the various factors we considered when the COS, [REDACTED] recommended the promotion [REDACTED] GS-07 25X1A Information Control Assistant. For the sake of simplicity and promptness that memo was limited to a recital of the facts relevant to the specific case, but the institutional problems (we spoke of them on the telephone as well) implicit in that exposition deserve some comment, hence this follow-up memorandum.

25X1A 2. (C) Another case [REDACTED] handled differently by the 25X1A DDCI, has caused a furor in the Information Services Staff (ISS), and Mr. Knoche has probably heard all he wishes about the matter. There is an aspect of that case which has perhaps been overlooked in the tumult, however. The negative reaction is eloquent testimony to the sterility of our personnel practices as they relate to the development, deployment and advancement of junior-grade employees. In a healthier climate of opinion, the spot promotion of an able employee by the DDCI for outstanding performance would have been applauded, not condemned. The criticism of the spot promotion and our inability to support the [REDACTED] COS' recommendation on Mr. 25X1A [REDACTED] have their roots in practices of long standing. Some of these practices are not of Agency devising, but external origins do not ensure either wisdom or relevance in personnel policy, which should above all be dynamic. In citing some of the most significant of these practices we will not presume to suggest solutions, but merely to identify some things which merit the concerned attention of Agency management.

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3. (U/AIUO) Clerical vs. Professional Status - The dichotomies to be found in a comparison between professional and clerical employees are staggering when assessed in human terms. "Second-class citizenship" is a mild description to attach to our corps of dedicated clerks and secretaries, who have been fixed in grade unless they were fortunate enough to be in a position which provided "head-room". Competitive evaluation was not for these employees - promotion for merit without regard to the grade of the position occupied was available only to the "professional". Yet how many "professionals" were and are highly dependent for their effectiveness on the thoroughly professional support of well-trained, well-motivated personnel familiar with processes, files and procedures which are fundamental to the Agency's mission? The recent exercise in the Directorate of Operations to review and rank for competitive promotion all GS-07 clericals with more than two years in grade, is a welcome break with the tradition of the past. The need for such a step, and the depth of the problem still to be faced, is graphically illustrated by the fact that the panel reviewing these GS-07's found, in one category of personnel, I am told, 19 out of 23 persons from ISS qualified for promotion. One of these had been in grade since 1957 - twenty years! Personnel who have lived with such constraints cannot be expected to take a broad, generous view when the rules are waived for one of their number. (A different kind of demoralizing situation will arise during the transition period, as personnel who had succeeded in attaining assignment to a non-professional slot with headroom discover that the ground rules they have learned to live with have changed.)

✓ 4. (U/AIUO) Position Classification - In a system which depends so completely upon position grade for personnel advancement the role of the position classifier becomes paramount. Those of us who manage large groups of clerical employees often feel in bondage to the Position Management and Compensation Division (PMCD) of the Office of Personnel. When I came into my present position as C/ISS earlier this year, I was struck by the recurrence of references to PMCD - the letters seemed to be on everyone's lips. I learned that PMCD had been surveying ISS positions on and off for almost two years, with no announced conclusions yet available. Employees whose hopes for advancement are tied to position grade may be excused for their mounting impatience with a system which is apparently oblivious to their concerns and needs. ISS is also involved in a dialogue with PMCD on

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another matter, the development of new standards and benchmarks for many of our positions, using the Factor Evaluation System promoted by the Civil Service Commission. Clearly it is to our advantage to have the opportunity to shape these standards to ensure realism and relevance, and we will strive to take full advantage of the opportunity PMCD has provided. We have already registered our dismay, however, as managers of a highly automated, increasingly sophisticated and demanding records storage and retrieval system, because the draft standards write off technology as a mere convenience which does not affect the basic level of mail or file work. The personnel who are expected to qualify themselves through training and experience to handle these new techniques can hardly be enthusiastic about a system which seems dedicated to exploiting them by demanding more and more with no increase in status or emolument. Organizational or government-wide concerns about "grade-creep" have little relevance to people at this level.

5. (U/AIUO) Career Planning and Development - Clearly related to the foregoing concerns are employee perceptions about the organization's interest in them and their careers - and many have made careers in these clerical positions. (Among our GS-07's in ISS are twenty-five whose longevity computation dates are 1960 or earlier, for example.) Again, grade progression is a fundamental concern, and the development of skills which will permit movement to a slot with headroom is seen by many as the only real way to progress, other than relying on the buddy system with its vicissitudes and pitfalls. But most perceive the Agency's efforts in the area of career development to be feeble and half-hearted at best. In ISS, with one of the largest groups of low-graded personnel in the Agency, we have attempted to do something more dynamic in this area. We make extensive use of vacancy notices, for one thing, and we have developed a detailed guide to career development which provides the interested employee with detailed information about the avenues he may follow to achieve a more satisfying career in the field of records management. Reactions to this effort have been positive, though many problems remain, some of them exacerbated by the clerical/professional dichotomy and the PMCD roles already mentioned. We do not pretend to have found final solutions, but a significant number of persons home-based in ISS believe that we are actively trying to maintain a fair, dynamic program which has, as one of its goals, broader access to opportunity for more people. A heavy emphasis on rotation and on

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training is another aspect of this program, with systematic review of personnel records to try to prevent stagnation.



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